

Policy For Public Assembly And Petitioning And Distribution Of Literature On Library District Property

Approved by the Board of Trustees July 23, 2019

Policy for Public Assembly and Petitioning and Distribution of Literature on Library District Property

Pursuant to the authority granted to the St. Joseph Public Library District (SJPL) under RSMo § 182.230, this policy establishes reasonable rules and regulations controlling public assembly and the petitioning and distribution of literature to employees or patrons on SJPL property by individuals or groups.

Persons are prohibited from engaging in organized public speech or holding public assemblies, protests, rallies, and/or gatherings (collectively, "Assembly"), and from engaging in the personal petitioning or distribution of literature to library employees and patrons (collectively, "Petitioning") in SJPL buildings and grounds except as provided herein. Petitioners and those Assembling are allowed as long as they are in designated areas and follow library policies. Government agencies that disseminate information in SJPL buildings pursuant to the approval of the Library Director or his/her designee are not engaged in petition or distribution of literature as defined in this policy, and are not subject to the restrictions herein.

Assembly and/or Petitioning are only allowed on SJPL property in the following circumstances:

1. Assembly and/or Petitioning are permitted inside the library only when included as part of the agenda of a meeting officially scheduled in a library meeting room, and approved in accordance with SJPL's Meeting Room Policy.
2. Except as part of an officially scheduled meeting, those engaged in Assembly and/or Petitioning, shall be required to stand outside library buildings on SJPL property in areas designated by staff, away from entrances, and must not impede traffic or pursue patrons.

If an individual engaged in Assembly and/or Petitioning is not in a designated area, is impeding traffic, or pursues patrons, he or she will be asked to follow the guidelines contained in this policy. If the guidelines are not followed, the individual will be asked to leave the premises.

The allowance of any Assembly or Petitioning on SJPL property shall not be deemed to constitute an endorsement by SJPL of the content of such Assembly or Petitioning.

Any person wishing to appeal or otherwise question the enforcement of a restriction under this policy should be referred to the Library Director or his/her designee.

This policy is not designed to prohibit the initial access of any person to SJPL property, and shall be enforced without prejudice or arbitrary distinctions between individuals, classes of individuals, or the opinions being expressed.

Designated Areas: the following locations may be used by individuals or groups who desire to engage in Assembly and/or Petitioning on SJPL property:

Carnegie Library: In the library park at the bench on the east side of the library.

Downtown Library: On the sidewalk in a location that does not impede patrons from accessing the front steps.

Washington Park Library: In the library park at the front of the building by the two benches.

East Hills Library: An area of eight squares of concrete halfway between the statue garden and the front door. The nine squares are between the pillars. Petitioners and those Assembling should not be on the sidewalk in front of the pillars or the ten squares of concrete directly in front of the entrance. Petitioners and Assemblers may not impede entrance into the library. Please see picture below for clarification. The green area is the area where petitioners should stand.



Hours & Locations

Downtown Library